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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

SMALLEY, JAMES N

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3727

DATE MAILED: 10/05/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/754,413

Applicant(s)

AKERS, PAUL

Examiner

James N. Smalley

Art Unit

3727

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 8/16/2004.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities: The word "cove" should be "cover" in the 4th to last line of claim 1 on page 2 of the amended claims. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1 and 4-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schneider US 4,318,490.

Schneider '490 teaches a cover for closing bottles comprising stiff backings (6) and (11), and a pressure sensitive adhesive (7), (9) and (12). In col. 2, lines 62-68, the reference teaches the backings should be of sufficient rigidity to prevent bending when being handled. Regarding the intended use of the claimed invention, i.e. a cover for a beverage container assembly, the invention taught by Schneider '490 is capable of being used in the intended manner. It has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (1987).

Regarding claims 4-10, Examiner notes the portions of the lid appear to be relative to a "cover portion" which is dependant upon the side of the drink opening on which the cover is placed. In other words, the size of the drink opening and the orientation of the cover relative to this drink opening, will thus define the sizes of the first, second, third and forth portions. Because the claim is drawn to the cover, and the placement of the cover on a beverage container lid is the intended use of the device, the invention taught by Schneider '490 anticipates the claimed invention because it is capable of being used in the intended manner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 2-3 and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schneider US 4,318,490.

Schneider '490 teaches in col. 2, lines 62-68, the reference teaches the backings should be of sufficient rigidity to prevent bending when being handled. However the method for determining the stiffness disclosed in col. 3, lines 1-11 appears to be different than the ASTN D 790-96cn method taught in page 12 of the Specification.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the covering device of Schneider '490 to a deflection of between 0.0 and 1.2 inches by the ASTN D 790-96cn method, or to any other stiffness, because has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233.

6. Claims 11-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Clements US 4,589,569 in view of Schneider US 4,318,490 and in view of Coy US 4,782,975.

Clements '569 teaches a coffee lid comprising a drink opening (20) adjacent a lid recess (30) but fails to teach covering the drink opening with a removable cover.

Schneider '490 teaches a removable cover for closing bottles comprising stiff backings (6) and (11), and a pressure sensitive adhesive (7), (9) and (12). In col. 2, lines 62-68, the reference teaches the backings should be of sufficient rigidity to prevent bending when being handled.

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Coy '975 teaches it is known to provide a removable cover (16) over a beverage cup drink opening. In col. 3, lines 47-54, Coy '975 teaches the tab (16) is to be applied to prepackaged products, affixed by adhesive bonding.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the cover of Schneider '490 to the coffee lid drink opening of Clements '569 because Coy '975 teaches it is known to apply removable covers to drink openings. Furthermore, the method claims are obviated by the combined teachings, because it would have been obvious to use the cover of Schneider '490 on the lid of Clements '569, applying it and removing it before use, as taught by Coy '975.

Regarding the deflection value of the cover, Schneider '490 teaches in col. 2, lines 62-68, the reference teaches the backings should be of sufficient rigidity to prevent bending when being handled. However the method for determining the stiffness disclosed in col. 3, lines 1-11 appears to be different than the ASTM D 790-96cn method taught in page 12 of the Specification.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the covering device of Schneider '490 to a deflection of between 0.0 and 1.2 inches by the ASTM D 790-96cn method, or to any other stiffness, because it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: See attached PTO-892, citing relevant references.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James N. Smalley whose telephone number is (571) 272-4547. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 9-6:30, Alternate Fri 9-5:30.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nathan Newhouse can be reached on (571) 272-4544. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

jns


NATHAN J. NEWHOUSE
PRIMARY EXAMINER